

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 01473 111520Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DODE-00 PM-04 INR-07 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05

PER-01 OMB-01 ABF-01 MMO-01 /046 W
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R 111449Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3067
INFO USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GER

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FOR AF/E AND AF/EX

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, ET
SUBJ: MAAG REORGANIZATION

REF: STATE 47366

1. GREATLY APPRECIATE REFTEL WHICH PROVIDES DEPT SUPPORT FOR PROPOSED REORGANIZATION AND OUR PLANS TO MOVE MAAG TO EMBASSY COMPOUND. WHILE SOME DETAILED PLANNING CAN CONTINUE, WE WILL SOON BE FACED WITH NEED TO TAKE IMPLEMENTING STEPS RANGING FROM DIFFICULT TO IMPOSSIBLE TO RETRACT. SUCH STEPS WILL ALSO BECOME MORE AND MORE VISIBLE TO THE EPMG. I DO NOT WISH TO ENTER THAT STAGE WITHOUT FIRST TELLING ETHIOPIANS WHAT WE ARE DOING, HOWEVER.

2. WHILE I DO NOT PARTICULARLY RELISH THOUGHT OF TELLING EPMG RIGHT NOW NOR IN NEAR FUTURE OF OUR INTENTION TO CUT MAAG IN LIGHT OF RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT WE ELIMINATING MAP IN FY 78, IT WILL HAVE TO BE DONE SOME-TIME AND, IN FACT, MUST BE DONE REASONABLY SOON DUE TO THE MANY AND VARIED PREPARATORY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THE REDUCTION IN PERSONNEL, THE PHYSICAL MOVE AND MYRIAD RELATED ACTIVITIES IN ORDER TO COMPLETE

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PROCESS OF MOVING BEFORE END OF FY 77. MAAG AND EMBASSY ADMIN HAVE ALREADY DRAWN UP A BROAD TIME-PHASED SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETING THESE STEPS WITH WHICH I AGREE IN PRINCIPLE. HOWEVER, IF WE WERE TO IMPLEMENT THEM EVEN IN LOW-KEY MANNER BEFORE ADVISING EPMG, WE NONETHELESS COULD EXPECT EPMG TO BECOME AWARE OF WHAT WE WERE DOING AND TO REACT BADLY -- IN MY JUDGMENT, UNDERSTANDABLY

SO, WITH UNCERTAIN CONSEQUENCES. I CANNOT BE SURE HOW EPMG LIKELY TO REACT TO NEWS WHEN WE TELL THEM. GIVEN THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF WORLDWIDE MAAG AND MAP REDUCTIONS BEYOND FY 77 EXPLICIT IN LAST YEAR'S ARMS EXPORT ACT AND GIVEN OUR RECENT NOTIFICATION WITH RESPECT TO MAP ON THOSE AND HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS, NOTIFICATION OF MAAG REDUCTION SHOULD NOT COME AS MAJOR SURPRISE. SOME ETHIOPIANS WILL NONETHELESS INTERPRET IT AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF WHAT THEY SEE AS OUR APPARENT INTENTION TO DISENGAGE FROM THIS COUNTRY. OTHERS WILL PROBABLY WELCOME IT.

3. IN SUM, IF WE WISH COMPLETE MOVE BY SEPT 30, WE NEED TO MOVE AHEAD VERY SOON ON MAAG REORGANIZATION AND RELOCATION WHICH HAVE MANY FACETS AND WILL TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME, BUT I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE A SERIOUS MISTAKE TO DO SO WITHOUT TELLING THE ETHIOPIANS OF OUR INTENTIONS FIRST. I WOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE DEPT GUIDANCE AT AN EARLY DATE ON WHAT WE MIGHT ADVISE EPMG AND ANY PARTICULAR LINE TO BE TAKEN IN DOING SO. NEEDLESS TO SAY IT WOULD BEHELPFUL TO COUPLE NOTIFICATION WITH NEWS OF SOME FORWARD MOTION ON AMMO REQUEST.

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